thought: she should have been generous, and dismissed her. But have kings—they to whom the charge of the life, the happiness, of millions is intrusted—have kings the right to indulge in the luxury of generosity, when that generosity must needs entail destruction on thousands alive and happy? I answer confidently, they have *not* the right. But Elizabeth was not generous. She imprisoned her fallen rival, cruelly, for long and weary years; unjustly, in accordance with right and law—justly, in accordance with true policy, and the welfare of her own country and the world at large.

The question of the execution is less doubtful. That Mary was privy to Norfolk's, to Babington's plot is, I fear, proved beyond a doubt. It was a question of life and death between the two, and nothing but the axe or the knife could end it. The axe ended it; and we cannot, I think, regret the catastrophe, however much we may deplore the fate of the lovely, the miserable, the deeply-injured Mary—however much we may condemn the perfidiousness, the cold-blooded duplicity, the bitter malignity, the hard-hearted policy of Elizabeth.

Yet she, too, was avenged. For who can doubt that the death of Elizabeth—agonized by secret remorse, refusing sustenance or aid of medicine, groaning her soul away in undiscovered sorrow for ten whole nights and days of unknown anguish, perishing like a gaunt, old, famished lioness, in despair at the deeds herself had done—was more tremendous fiftyfold, and fiftyfold less pitied, than that of her discrowned rival?

THE FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGE.

BY F. E. F., AUTHOR OF "A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"Vanity—all is vanity, saith the preacher."—Eccl.

"You 'll do it for me, then?" asked, or rather said, Clara Heywood to her cousin Frank; for it was spoken in a tone that showed that she was accustomed to have her slightest wish attended to.

"I 'll do *mon possible*," replied the young man, gayly.

"Your '*possible!*'" she exclaimed, with a slight accent of scorn, turning her full bright eyes upon him. "Any man can do that."

"And who can do more?" he inquired, laughingly.

"George Herbert would be glad of the opportunity to do the *impossible*," she replied. "So, when your '*possible*' fails, let me know; and I 've only to call upon him." It was spoken both proudly and carelessly, as one who knew her power where, at the same time, she cared little to please.

"Take care, Clara," said Frank, earnestly.

"Take care of what?" she asked, somewhat haughtily.

"You know what I mean," he replied in the same tone. "You know your power over Herbert, and it 's cruel to encourage him."

"*I* encourage him!" she replied, turning her flashing eyes upon her cousin. "I thought you knew me better, Frank."

"Surely, if to walk with a man, and talk to him, sing to him, play chess with him, accept his flowers, and praise his poetry—in short, receive devotions breathed in the very spirit of homage—is not encouragement, I do not know what is," replied Heywood. "Indeed, Clara, I 've known you to keep men of greater pretensions at a greater distance. In fact, I 've sometimes almost doubted what you did mean. And if, Clara, I, who, as you say, know you so well, have at times looked on in surprise, you should not wonder if Herbert himself should be misled; and, I repeat it, if you mean nothing, it 's cruel in you to trifle with him thus."

"You surely do not mean," she replied, "that Mr. Herbert presumes upon my kindness. I have treated him, as you say, with a degree of civility that I certainly should not have accorded to one of higher claims; but *he* has no pretensions to presume upon, consequently I concluded I could not be misunderstood."

"Possibly he does not rate his claim so low," replied Frank. "He is a man of talents, and knows it, for modesty and merit are not always hand in hand; and, besides, dazzled and entranced as he is by your grace and beauty, it is asking almost too much of any man to expect him to see the line—which, after all, broad and strong as you think it, is yet an imaginary one—that separates you. You talk to him with interest and animation"——

"Certainly," she interrupted; "for he has decided talents. I know no man who converses so well, consequently he interests and amuses me; but, because I talk to him with pleasure, it does not follow that I can forget, for a moment, what is due to myself."

"Then it 's a pity," said her cousin, "that you could not, at the same time, remember what is due to him."

"Due to him! Why, how strangely you talk, Frank!" she replied. "Pray what is due to *him*? A young man without family, or fortune or position, what can he expect? A man who, I suppose, scarcely knew what a lady born and bred was before he knew me. Really, if it were not that we are situated just as we are in the country for a few weeks, I should not even take the notice of him that I do. But, after we leave here, I shall proba-

bly never see him again; and, if I have derived some pleasure from his society, and he has rendered my stay here more endurable than it would otherwise have been, I consider the obligation as more than repaid. I have given him some glimpses of another world of which he had no knowledge before, some tastes and views"——

"Which he had much better been without, Clara," interrupted Frank. "You have, in short, fired his heart and turned his head—no small mischief to any man; but when it comes to a man of genius, of susceptible temperament, the evil is incalculable. With an ordinary man, hope being destroyed, love dies away and leaves no vestige. But when the impression is as vivid in the brain as the heart, when the idol has been idealized, the traces left are indelible, stamped in burning bitterness, or graven in deep melancholy, according to the temper of the man. And thus to embitter, perhaps exhaust, the best feelings of a man's nature is surely to do him a great wrong. That you are the first high-bred, finished woman Herbert has ever met on an intimate footing makes the impression all the fresher, keener. His tastes are all instinctively refined and elegant. The torch was ready, and you have applied the light. You may pass away and forget him, or only remember with a smile the enthusiastic homage rendered to your powers by a son of genius; but not so will it be with him. He will not readily comprehend that you have thus drawn upon his better nature and sported with his affections, merely *pour passer le temps*, till Mrs. Rutledge could join you. And, if I mistake not, the knowledge, when it does come, will make a most unhappy impression on him."

"Oh, nonsense!" she answered, laughing. "Men don't break their hearts and die of love. He 'll survive it."

"He will," Frank replied. "But you have given him a *beau idéal* he will probably never be able to attain; while, at the same time, you will have destroyed his faith in woman. With a quickened imagination and a chilled heart, I very much doubt whether Herbert will ever be as happy a man as he was before he knew you. You have crossed his path like a vision, to leave him cold and fastidious."

"Well," she replied, quietly, "that will only prevent his marrying some common woman, as most men of talents do. I like to see a man critical. If I have given Herbert elevated and refined views of woman, I think he is greatly indebted to me."

"Refined are very different from elevated views," replied Frank.

"One of your distinctions without a difference," she replied, a little impatiently.

"The difference of the moral from the intellectual," he rejoined; "and none can be greater."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, suddenly interrupting him, "is that the sound of wheels? I hope it 's Mary. It is!" she continued, joyfully, as she threw up the window.

And, in fact, it was Mrs. Rutledge, the sister, whose delay upon the road, owing to the illness of a child, had detained Miss Heywood at the pretty village of C——, where, with some friends, she awaited her arrival, to continue their northern tour Thus accident had thrown her in the way of George Herbert, who was residing there as a student at law. In the impatience and lassitude of this sudden pause in her journey, Clara Heywood would have hailed almost anything or anybody as a godsend that served to beguile the time that hung so heavily on her hands; consequently, it is not surprising that, discerning, with the quick discrimination of one used to society, the superior gifts of young Herbert, she graciously accorded him much of her time, careless and thoughtless of consequences to him. Highly cultivated herself, his conversation really interested her; and accustomed as she had been to admiration, and cold as she was by nature, and worldly by education, she was yet woman enough to be pleased and flattered by the homage of the young student. For he was a man of genius, and his admiration had the freshness, the glow of poetry as well as passion, to which she had not been accustomed among the men of the world by whom she had been surrounded. That she, beautiful and high-bred, should at once become his "life's star," the realization of his visions, the actual of his ideal, the spirit of his dreams, followed as a matter of course. Impressionable as all men of genius are to externals, he absolutely knelt in spirit before the shrine of her beauty; and, proud of his mental superiority, he would readily have bowed before one less brilliant, who drew forth and appreciated his intellectual gifts. Thus she excited his imagination and stimulated his vanity, and, in the ardor of passion, he gave himself up to his feelings, unchecked by fear or thought. Modesty formed no part of his character, and he was too ignorant of the world to be diffident. No doubts therefore clouded his present, and no thought dimmed his future; for, had he paused to think, he must have known that hope itself was hopeless, as, could he even have won his idol, he had no shrine wherein to place it, no niche, however small, for his statue. Poor student as he was, he had scarce enough to maintain himself during his studies; for the reputation he so clearly saw in the distance, and the fortune he was so confident of making, were yet "to be" won and "to be made." He little knew the ambitious, high-spirited nature of the beautiful being he idealized, if he supposed that, even with fairer prospects and a more smiling present, he would have stood any better chance than he did under existing circumstances. Clara Heywood was as haughty as she was high-bred. Pride of birth and place was more powerful with her than pride of talent or beauty. No glories of a setting sun could have made her forget the mists of a cloudy rising. She was a proud woman; but her pride was of the "earth, earthy," and touched, as the darker edges of her mind were, with the light of a bright imagination, it was only to illumine, not elevate, her character.

Herbert had now, however, an opportunity of seeing some of those shades of feeling which circumstances had hitherto thrown in the background; for, with Mrs. Rutledge, arrived a party from the South, among whom there were one or two men of the position and stamp Clara valued. The change in her manner was marked. She not only turned at once from Herbert to address herself to them, but the tone was different. There was a *retènu* of manner which she had never thought worth while to show to a poor student, but which she instinctively assumed in coming in contact with those whose station commanded her respect. But with her reserve there was more of excitement; little things marked the change. She dressed, not more, for her taste was perfect, but differently. The colored morning dress gave place to the finest white *negligée*, edged with delicate lace, and the gossamer breakfast-cap was replaced at dinner by a water-lily; in short, it was evident that *now* there was some one worth dressing for, and Herbert saw that the easy friendliness with which she had treated him, and which had so captivated him, was anything but flattering to his pride. Mr. Ashfield, the principal person in the group, and the one to whom Clara chiefly addressed herself, was a distinguished-looking man, one who had traveled much, and bore the stamp of being one of "fortune's favorites." A fair portion of understanding, with a good education, and much knowledge of the world, rendered him, upon the whole, agreeable. Not that his powers of conversation could be at all compared to Herbert's, for his mind was originally of a much inferior tone, and his acquirements superficial in the extreme. But he was *au fait* to all the fashionable gossip of the day, had heard Jenny Lind, and could talk of the last new opera, knew the styles of the different composers and artists; and so Clara turned carelessly from Herbert, or listened half listlessly, half impatiently, to the poetical and literary disquisition that had before interested her, as from themes for which she had now no time. He was stung to the quick, not more, however, by her manner to himself than by her manner to Ashfield, for it let in a flood of light upon his mind that inflicted anguish almost intolerable to his irritable and excited temperament. He felt, for the first time, the power of *position*. Talents without the stamp of *fame* he saw were, with these worldlings, valueless, and the mortifications of a quick and sensitive vanity were not the least among his sufferings. He sometimes foolishly thought to lower Ashfield in Clara's eyes by attacking some of his assertions, and exposing the fallacy of his arguments; but, whenever he did so, she quickly turned the scales by throwing her brilliant powers of ridicule or wit on Ashfield's side, covering his deficiencies, and often even bringing him off victorious. Herbert became irritable, and often lost his temper on these occasions, when Mr. Ashfield would look at him in calm surprise, as if he thought him a very ill-bred young man, and then, turning away, address him no more. In all discussions on fashionable topics, Herbert was, of course, left out; and this quietly passing him by as one out of the *clique*, not belonging to the same sphere, hurt him perhaps more than all the rest. The gay world at once assumed an importance in his eyes it had never had before. What was fame in futurity with only poetry for the present, when coolly looked down upon and distanced by a mere man of fashion, and slighted by the bright, but scornful, eyes of beauty?

His gods were dashed to the ground, and inferior idols raised in their place.

Mrs. Rutledge's child recovered, and the party resumed their journey; and Clara passed on, unconscious and careless of the misery she had inflicted, and the mischief she had done.

CHAPTER II.

"And this, too, is vanity."—Eccl.

"Don't forget, Fanny," said Miss Hastings to her sister, "to send a card for this Mr. Herbert with the Harpers' invitations."

"Oh, I am glad you put me in mind of it," replied her sister. "Mary introduced him to me the other night, and it would have been a slight, I suppose, to omit him."

"As the Harpers have announced the engagement, and are introducing him to all their friends, of course, they would be hurt by any want of attention to him; and it certainly would be rude not to include him when inviting them."

"Of course. I am glad you mentioned it, or I should have forgotten all about him. Who is he? Do you know?"

"No; only what Mrs. Bolton told me, that he is a young lawyer, and that the family like him very much."

"Where did they pick him up?" continued Miss Hastings. "I never heard of him before."

"I don't think he has been here long," replied her sister. "Tom Harper happened to meet him somewhere, and was pleased with him, and introduced him to his family."

"What sort of a match is it for her?" pursued Miss Hastings.

"I don't know. Mrs. Bolton did not seem to think much of it. He is poor, just starting in his profession."

"What made the Harpers take him up so, I wonder?" returned the other.

"They say he is very clever, quite remarkable, indeed. Mr. Harper thinks he has more talent than any young man he knows now at the bar."

"What in the world, then, made him fall in love with Mary Harper, I should like to know?" exclaimed Miss Hastings, in a tone of surprise. "She is as plain and unattractive a girl as I know. How odd that she should have captivated a man of talents!"

"Oh no, nothing is odd in the way of matrimony," replied her sister, laughing; "particularly if a man of talent is one of the parties. Did you ever see one that did not make an extraordinary match? They all marry little, commonplace dowdies."

"So they do. But still I cannot understand it," pursued Miss Hastings.

"No," continued her sister, in the same tone of banter; "it 's one of those mysteries not to be penetrated in this world."

"Are they to be married soon?" asked the elder sister.

"Not for a year, I understood. He 's poor, and she has nothing, you know. Here, give me the card, and let me inclose it, and then there 'll be no mistake about it."

This conversation took place some eight months or a year after we last saw George Herbert in C——. The Hastings were one of the gayest families in the great metropolis of New York, where Herbert had established himself soon after he passed his examination. Accident had made him acquainted with young Harper, who had introduced him to his family. The position of the Harpers was such as to make their acquaintance very gratifying to Herbert. Their fashion was unquestioned, and their name among the best, and, though there was no particular interest attached to any one individual of the family, yet Herbert sought their society with eagerness.

Plain and unattractive as Mary Harper had been pronounced to be, she was yet not devoid of sensibility, and she soon became captivated with the brilliant powers of the young lawyer. Herbert, still chafing under the keen mortification of Clara Heywood, was not insensible to the charm of being treated with so much attention by such a family as the Harpers'. A connection with them would at once open the gates of that paradise, the fashionable world, that he had lately learned to prize so highly. He offered himself, and was accepted. Hence the "mystery" that puzzled Miss Hastings so much. She knew not that men of genius have the same weaknesses that fall to the lot of more obtuse mortals. And when they do, the very fierceness of their organization makes them the more susceptible to external influences.

Herbert's was not a vigorous, manly mind. It took too much the impress of his character, which was weak. He knew himself superior to those whose admiration he coveted, and yet he coveted it not the less. He was not in love with Mary Harper; but he was proud of his engagement. He was happy in his gratified vanity; though, had she been a Mary Brown, he would hardly have helped her across the gutter. Mr. Harper liked the young man; and, though he would have been glad if he had had some money, yet he knew enough of the world to know that, with such talents, he could not fail to make his way in his profession, and would probably, in the end, prove an excellent match for his daughter. His consent was therefore given, with only the stipulation of a year's delay before the marriage.

Mary was as happy as the purest and most perfect love could make her. Need we add more?

The engagement being announced, Herbert was introduced and invited wherever the Harpers visited; and, in the course of a few weeks, he found himself as freely launched in "good society" as if he had been a born and bred member of the "charmed circle." The diffidence with which he entered, arising from a remembrance of Clara Heywood and Mr. Ashfield, soon yielded to the animating influence of flattery. He was not only received, but *well* received. His reputation for talents, and his powers of conversation, procured him respect and attention. He was going to marry Mary Harper, and no one cared whether he was poor or rich. He was brilliant, and that was enough for those who gave parties and wanted agreeable men. He looked round him, and soon felt his value, and thought, like Mr. Bumble, that he had "gone cheap." Clara Heywood had, as her cousin had prophesied, crossed him like a vision, to leave him cold and fastidious. And worse than that, she had destroyed his faith in those about him. He believed them all as cold and worldly as she, whom he looked upon as a type of her class, and his was not that earnest nature that keeps itself above the ordinary level. Here, indeed, he fell short of it; for, in looking upon others as heartless, he had become so himself.

There is a sort of poetical justice that Nature exacts from those who undervalue her claims. What the individual is not willing to render to the mass, he is before long generally found wanting himself. Of the worldly crowd whom he gazed on with contempt, there were few as worldly as himself. But this very fastidious coldness gave him self-possession and success. His fine sense of the beautiful made him at once critical and enthusiastic. He paid little attention but to those pre-eminent for something—wit, beauty, music; some claim, and that decided, they must have, to win his notice. But, when the gift was marked, no homage could be more enthusiastic and delightful than that he rendered. People quoted, and beauties courted him.

Mary Harper was proud of her young lover. She was too generous to harbor a thought of jealousy, and she gloried in his rising reputation. But ere many months had passed by, even her confiding nature could not but feel uneasy pangs. In fact, Herbert was growing careless. He had never loved her; and now, as he saw how easy a thing it was to win that which he had coveted, a position in society, he regretted the sacrifice he had made. Not that he valued the thing less; only the price he had paid for it. He felt his engagement irksome. He regretted it; and, regretting, relaxed in his attentions to Mary, which, in the blindness of a devoted, but not sensitive, affection, she did not see. From inattentive, he became positively careless. Still, she could not credit the truth. There was such

anguish in the thought that she could not bring herself to look it steadily in the face.

The year elapsed, and Herbert let the anniversary of his engagement pass in cold silence, trusting that Mary would be roused to break the tie that bound him. But she did not. She explained it to herself on the ground of prudence. Herbert could not afford to marry yet, and was too proud to own it. She clung to the engagement.

From not loving her, he grew almost to hate her. He dared not openly break himself. Her family and position were such that he was unwilling to incur the odium he must draw upon himself in the *clique* by taking such a step. Besides, though a cold, he prided himself upon being an honorable man. If she insisted on it, he would marry her, though love her he would not pretend to. And valuing himself on such a code of honor, he rather looked upon himself as a victim to his high-toned, gentlemanly feelings, to which poor Mary's happiness—of which he never thought—was to be the sacrifice. Little as the attention was with which he treated Mary, still he was obliged to give her some, and with that little she was resolved to be content. Had she been a spirited girl, she would not have borne it, nor ought she. But she shut her eyes, and sealed her own doom. Herbert could no longer postpone the evil day. Mary would not break the engagement, and he could not.

His last effort was when he appealed to her to name the day. He spoke of his poverty, of the hard lot that awaited one bred, as she had been, in luxury, as his wife. But, coldly as it was said, she trusted that it was only proudly felt. Her generosity was touched when her spirit should have been roused. In short, she was wanting in that dignity of character for which nothing feminine can atone. She could not acknowledge his indifference, and would not see his coldness. She said the fate that awaited her was her own choice.

In a better spirit, Herbert prepared for his marriage. A very small house, suited to his means, and large enough, had love been there, was taken, and Mr. Harper furnished it. The wedding took place amidst festivity and fashion. The bridegroom was remarked as being careless and looking cold; the bride as seeming anxious, but still happy. There were clouds upon his brow, but she would chase them away. She trusted to love and time to make him all she would have him. And then what she would not or could not understand in the waywardness of his temper, she put down, womanlike, to the "peculiarities of genius."

CHAPTER III.

"That which is crooked cannot be made straight. And that which is wanting cannot be numbered."—Eccl.

As a married man, Herbert continued very much the same as before in society. What time was not given to his profession was spent chiefly in the gay circle of which he was a favorite and brilliant ornament. He was very little at home, as little as he could help. He was naturally luxurious, hated small rooms, low ceilings, and shabby furniture. Hated being waited on by a female servant—in short, hated all the details of small means. He had been used to them always, certainly; but that does not reconcile people any the more to what they don't like, though those who know nothing of the matter suppose it does. The houses of the rich were open to him always, and there were club rooms, spacious and free, and pleasant avenues, to escape the perpetual remembrance of a limited income, which his own house forced upon him. His wife did her utmost to win him to love and home; but she failed.

She had married him against his will, and he resented it. She was gentle, and loving, and kind; but she did not gratify his vanity, and he did not love her the better for the privations they were compelled to endure together. She had no beauty nor mental superiority to supply the place of external charms, and he took no pains to cultivate her tastes, though he felt himself sacrificed, because they had no sympathies in common. Cold and careless from the first, he grew irritable, and often even rude. Heart-stricken and mortified, she tried, poor thing! every device that affection could suggest to make home attractive. There was no sacrifice that ingenuity could invent, to make their little income embrace some of the luxuries as well as necessaries of life, that she did not make. His little household was in the neatest order, and his table was supplied with delicacies that nothing but her personal exertion could have secured with their small means. In short, his tastes and comforts were studied with the most sedulous care, only to make him more selfish and exacting.

Had she known her own rights, and turned upon him with spirit, the effect would have been better. But that an inward consciousness prevented. Humbled by the conviction, which was forced upon her at last, that her husband did not love, she bitterly acknowledged to herself that she should have admitted the fact before. She could not conceal from herself now that she had married him in spite of his own wishes; that he had tried to break off, and she *would not*. But for that, an outraged love might have roused to another course. She would have felt indignant as well as aggrieved, and remembered what she, as Mary Harper, had sacrificed in becoming Mrs. Herbert. The deep consciousness, however, that her husband would gladly have spared her the sacrifice of becoming his wife, quenched every spark of womanly spirit. She scarcely felt herself his equal, and made herself his drudge. A fatal error. Brilliant as he was in society, many pitied him for having such a little dowdy wife. Indeed, he pitied himself. He was eloquent on the subject of "imperfect sympathies," and talked sadly and beautifully of a life that was

"aimless" There were never any personal allusions in his remarks, and perhaps he even did not mean others to apply them; for he talked from the abundance of a poetical imagination and discontented mind, which he mistook for the sadness of a heart that knew no resting-place. He had no sense of duty, no sense of anything that required sacrifice; only a deep sense of his own gifts, and that, somehow, his destiny had not been fulfilled.

Such merits as his wife possessed he did not appreciate—her patience, her gentleness, her exertions. How she would sew! What rows and rows of stitching she would put upon his linen, and how beautifully she did it! And, if he noticed at all what she was doing, he only thought she liked it! Better would it have been for him, a thousand times, and infinitely better for her, if his wife had been a different woman. Such qualities as she had were worse than thrown away upon him, for they only spoilt him. Had she played the harp and sung, though she never touched a needle and neglected his comforts, he might have been sometimes cross, but he would never have despised her. Had he married Clara Heywood, he would have been a better man; for, in admiring her, he would have known what was her due.

Had he been proud of his wife, he would have exerted himself more cheerfully in the path of duty; and even his small home would have borne a different aspect, had the wife who presided there been one whom others admired. But he was growing absolutely ashamed of Mary, as the consciousness of not pleasing rendered her diffident, and consequerdly awkward, and the little air she had had as Miss Harper she now lost from her want of intercourse with society. Nothing tells sooner on a woman's appearance than a too close application to domestic duties; and, when you add to that a poor and common wardrobe, a woman must be elegant, indeed, who still retains her air of superiority. The grace that rises superior to a calico frock and the kitchen is truly grace of the rarest and finest quality. What then was poor Mary's hope of looking anything but the spiritless, over-served little drudge that she was?

The birth of a daughter was a vent at last for the mother's overcharged heart. She loved the child almost to idolatry. But to the father she brought no addition of love or happiness. He turned away almost in disgust from the little red thing that squalled so. A girl, too! and he hated girls. Had it been a boy, he might have felt some tenderness for the mother, while he indulged in pride in his child. But a poor, puny, crying little girl took no hold on his heart.

"How you cough, Mary!" said her husband to her.

"Yes," she replied. "I have taken cold."

"Do take something, then, and stop it. Can't you?"

It was spoken in impatience, for the sound jarred upon his ear. There was no tenderness in the tones, no kindness for his wife's suffering that suggested the remark.

The child was delicate, and night after night Mary paced the nursery with it in her arms, trying to soothe its pains, and still the cry she feared might reach its father's ears. And thus the cold, instead of growing better, settled in a little hacking cough, that irritated Mr. Herbert's nerves, while it wore out his wife's lungs. She grew daily paler and thinner; but she uttered no sound of complaint, and only when she thought of her baby her pale lips quivered, and the mother's heart rose within her. But she felt that her doom was written down, and she had no spirit to struggle against it. Her father's family she knew would receive her child, and to a sister's love she felt she could confide it. Her constitution and heart were alike broken, and Herbert knew it not.

The physician was the first that called his attention to the fact of his wife's failing health. He was both startled and shocked; for there is something in the near approach of death that appals the most heartless, unloved though the object may be. Herbert was attentive and kind now, and would have done all in his power to save her. But it was too late.

Fortunately, his sensibilities were not taxed long, or he might have felt, with Mr. Dubster, that she was a "tedious time dying." But he had scarce time to rally from the first shock he received on learning her situation, ere her rapidly sinking frame told him the sad story was near its close. Something like remorse was mingled with the horror he felt in the final separation of himself and wife. He had taken her "to love and cherish till death do us part." And how had he fulfilled his vow? He hung over her in anguish, and she smiled gratefully, while breath was ebbing fast; and relying on higher promises and brighter hopes than earth could have afforded her, "after this painful life ended," her spirit passed in peace.

Those who had voted Mrs. Herbert a dowdy during her life, pitied her now she was dead. Some even said her husband had been unkind to her, which others, again, indignantly denied.

"I don't suppose he beat her, Fanny, when I say he was unkind," said Charles Hastings to his sister; "but, if to neglect a woman is not to be unkind, I don't know what you call it."

"How do you know that Herbert neglected his wife?" warmly rejoined the young lady.

"He never was at home," replied the brother. "He was forever at clubs, or in society, and she never was with him."

"Well, perhaps she did not want to go," returned Fanny. "What pleasure could she find in society? A dull, ugly, little thing."

"Your plain, little people like society as well as others," remarked Hastings. "Because they give no pleasure, it does not follow they receive none. Society is to them a kind of *spectacle;* they like to

see how people dress, and what they are doing. They don't go to talk, but to look."

"But think what a bore to be taking such a person with one," urged Miss Hastings.

"If such a person happens to be one's wife," answered Charles, "I think she has a right to go in society if she likes it."

"But he was ashamed of her," continued Fanny.

"Ashamed of her!" exclaimed Hastings. "And what right had he to be ashamed of her? He was not obliged to marry her, and if he chose"——

"But there, Charles," interrupted his sister, "I think you are mistaken. I believe Herbert did his best to get rid of his engagement; but Mary Harper would not let him off."

"That 's bad," said the young man, emphatically. "That makes a difference."

"I believe it was nothing but a sense of honor that made him marry her," continued Fanny.

"It 's a pity his sense of honor could not have carried him a little farther, and made him treat her well after he had married her. Commend me to the honor that marries a woman to make her unhappy afterwards!"

"I always pitied him," pursued Miss Hastings. "He is such an agreeable man."

"Oh, he 's agreeable enough," said her brother, dryly.

You don't seem to like him, Charles?"

"No," he replied; "he 's a cold, selfish fellow."

"Cold!" she repeated. "Why, Charles, he is one of the most enthusiastic men, I know."

"Enthusiastic! Yes," replied Hastings. "He is in ecstasies, I grant you, with exquisite music; but a man may be a cold, selfish fellow for all that. And, if he leaves a poor little wife stitching at home, while he is indulging his elegant tastes abroad, I think he is."

"I never heard Herbert express a sentiment that was not noble and beautiful," continued Miss Hastings, warmly.

"He talks well, no doubt of that," said her brother. "He has talent enough."

"Depend upon it," persisted his sister, "that, if he had made a more congenial marriage, he would have been a different, and perhaps a better, man."

"I 've no doubt of that," replied her brother. "He always gave me the impression of a man that had met some early disappointment. If that be so, and he has been forced to marry against his inclinations, there 's some apology for the man. Not to get the woman one wants, and be obliged to take one you don't want, must put a gentleman's temper to rather an unpleasant trial, certainly. I wonder whom he 'll marry now," he pursued.

"Oh, don't begin to talk already of his marrying again," said Miss Hastings, quite shocked. "I met him yesterday with such a weeper on his hat, in the deepest black from his head to his boots, looking as sad and widowerlike as possible."

"He 'll be more interesting than ever," said her brother, a little sarcastically.

"But he really looked sad."

"I dare say," replied Hastings. "Herbert is just the man to have his imagination strongly affected by death. I should not be surprised if, by this time, he fancied he had been very much attached to his wife, and the most devoted of husbands. Besides, decency prevents his going in society at present. He cannot even show himself at the clubs, and no doubt he finds it dull enough in that little house of his by himself."

And this was pretty much the truth. Herbert was eminently a social man, and, cut off at once from all the pleasures he had been accustomed to, he found his lonely home gloomy and sad, indeed, when he returned to it after the business of the day. The intense silence and solitude where Death had so lately reigned impressed him with a sense of desolation that was almost intolerable. He suffered, and thought that he mourned. If he deceived others, he deceived himself. But it was his imagination that was in affliction, his fancy in mourning, not his heart; for, in his saddest moments even, he never yearned for his child.

CHAPTER IV.

"I said, in mine heart, 'Go to, now! I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure.' And, behold, this also is vanity."—Eccl.

"Whom do you think I met at Stanhopes last night, Fanny?" asked Charles Hastings.

"Whom?"

"Herbert!"

"Herbert! What, is he out again? Oh, how soon!"

"Bless you, do you think a man is never to show his face again, because he happens to lose his wife?"

"But she has been dead so short a time!" replied the sister.

"It 's a year, or near it," returned her brother. "Oh, he has done very well—behaved himself better than I expected."

Miss Hastings still looked dissatisfied, for women do not easily reconcile themselves to these changes; but so it was, Herbert had entered into society again, and with a zest that was new to him. The dull year he had passed in comparative solitude had sent him back to the gay world with a freshness and animation of feeling not so rare in widowers as one would wish. He had always been singularly under the influence of society for one of his superior endowments. He had been sensitive to its opinion, and anxious for its applause. In short, he had not been early used to it, and consequently always overvalued it. He had entered it a young and unknown man, introduced through the influence of the Harpers; then as a married man, with the drawback of a wife, who embarrassed him; and now, free and flattered, his society courted, the

world all before him where to choose. In the effervescence of the first excitement, he believed he had but to throw his handkerchief and "bless contending beauties."

The man's head was turned, which was the truth: no doubt a delightful state of being, though very absurd. He meant to marry again, and this time to gratify his tastes. He looked about him to find a woman who combined everything in one beautiful whole. Youth, beauty, music, were essential; grace and elegance not to be dispensed with; added to which he *must* have family and fashion.

He flirted with several, and, though nearly caught once or twice by the force of flattery, fortunately for both parties, he somehow escaped, after having given rise to hopes which, as the fancy passed, he did not feel himself at all bound to follow up.

"Who is that?" asked Herbert, one night, eagerly, as the youngest daughter of Mr. Howard entered a ball-room where he was.

"A daughter of Howard's," answered the person he addressed. "Handsome, I think, and decidedly stylish. Shows her blood."

Herbert followed with his eyes the statuelike-looking young creature who passed by him. She was rather pale, with delicate and finely-chiseled features, a well-formed head, and beautifully set upon her shoulders. The throat and shoulders were exquisite, and the whole air was thoroughly aristocratic. The marble was evidently Parian, and the workmanship of the highest finish. Most persons thought her too cold, some said she was inexpressive, and Herbert turned from them in impatience, as if thought and feeling would have disturbed the calm exclusive air he admired so much.

He solicited an introduction, and was presented. The young beauty received him in the same distant manner she received others, and evidently knew no difference between Mr. Herbert and the group of fashionable idlers who gathered quickly round her. He asked her to dance, and she declined. He took a seat upon the ottoman beside her, and tasked his powers to the utmost to amuse her. But on "the impassive ice the lightnings played." She smiled sometimes, but never thawed. A manner so new and unexpected piqued him. He redoubled his efforts, changed his style, passed from wit to poetry, touching many subjects as he glanced along with a rapidity and brilliancy that delighted those about him; he seemed, Prometheus-like, to have stolen fire from Heaven to animate his statue; but with very little effect. Once or twice she raised her eyes with an expression, a faint look, of something lighting up within, but it died away again; and, before long, she said to some one—

"Will you tell papa I am ready to go when he is?"

Presently Mr. Howard came up and said—

"Do you wish to go, Florence?"

"Yes," she replied, languidly, and as if quite unconscious of the presence of those before her, "I am very tired." And, rising, put her arm in her father's, and, bowing slightly to the group who surrounded her, left them, without an idea that she had been guilty of any rudeness.

Had she told Herbert that she was weary of him, the thing could not have been more decided. But, though he was piqued and mortified, he was not angry. It was evident she meant no rudeness. There was no shade of scorn in her manner, but merely a perfect oblivion, or rather an utter unconsciousness of other people's feelings, or even presence.

"Who is that Mr. Herbert, papa?" she asked.

"A lawyer," he replied. "Considered, I am told, the most rising man of the day. Did you find him agreeable?"

"He talks so much," she replied, wearily, as if the quantity had oppressed her.

"But very well, they say," continued her father.

She did not answer. She was fatigued. Herbert had kept her attention on the stretch, and she did not like being excited; she was not used to it. And when her father told her Herbert was a lawyer, she supposed talking so must be professional, and thought it, consequently, in bad taste.

She was as new to Herbert as he was to her; but with this difference, that she caught his imagination, and she had none to be caught.

She was quite different from the *beau idéal* he had created for himself. She had no talents. On the contrary, she seemed to despise them. It was the business of *artistes*, people who were paid, to sing and play. When ladies and gentlemen wanted music, they should go for it to the opera. She appeared to think conversation a condescension, and that no lady talked much, or with animation, without compromising herself. She smiled only occasionally, and never laughed. And this decided disinclination to entertain anybody only gave her, in Herbert's eyes, an air of exclusive refinement that accorded perfectly with her delicate and alabaster beauty. He felt that she was to be placed on a pedestal, and he willingly did homage at her shrine.

Cold as she was, however, she was not altogether insensible to his powers. She was as much flattered as it was in her nature to be by his admiration, for she saw that others thought it a matter of pride to win his notice. But when she first heard their names associated together in the fashionable gossip of the day, she started almost indignantly, and asked herself at once, "Could a Howard marry a self-made man without family?" and her spirit promptly answered, "No!" for the Howards were a race that prided themselves on their name. Why, few could have told; for they had little else to be proud of. There had been two or three generations of them, weak, well bred, and handsome, with some money and no talent; but, somehow, they fancied that the name was a patent of nobility.

When the first shock was over, however, and she became accustomed to the idea, Herbert's intimacy with them seemed insensibly to ennoble him, too

Her cold pride was gratified by the distinction that attached to her lover, and her father, knowing he was a very rising man, encouraged his attentions.

The difficulty of the pursuit enhanced, to Herbert, Florence's value; and, besides, he was weak enough to prize the name they so much valued themselves upon. He liked the idea of entering a connection so large and influential. His vanity, as well as his imagination, was excited, and he threw all he had of heart and soul in the pursuit.

It is not a woman's nature, however cold she may be, to turn insensible from the flattery that falls from the lips of genius, and Florence listened, and sometimes smiled, and sometimes sighed, for her feelings were in a strange state of contradiction to each other. She liked him, and yet he was not the kind of man that suited her taste. She was proud of him, and yet felt that it would be a condescension to marry him. She imagined that she would be losing *caste*. She preferred a gentleman to a man of genius, and she was not quite sure that Herbert could be the former, as he had not been born in the frozen circle of which she was one of the most delicate icicles. Could she only, like an English dame of rank, have kept her separate title, or even, like a Frenchwoman, retained the *née* Howard, it would not have been so hard. But to merge all the Howard in the Herbert, was a trial she felt keenly. But still she could not make up her mind to refuse him. She could not dispense with attentions so distinguished, nor dismiss flattery so delightful, and, when the offer came, it was accepted. Not accepted as a young girl should accept her lover, with her whole heart and soul, but with doubts and drawbacks that were not quite forgotten even in his presence.

The marriage took place in the course of a few months, in all "the pomp, the triumph, and the revelry" that the Howards delighted in. Brilliant entertainments, *recherché* dinners, and exclusive *matinées* were given from one end of the connection to the other, on the occasion. The fair bride, shaded in delicate lace, which looked like a frost-work suited to the frozen spirit it shrouded, received these attentions in silent, but perfect satisfaction.

Proud of his beautiful bride, and gratified by the manner in which he was received by her family, Herbert was brilliant with happiness. His imagination, always impressible to externals, threw a charm over *fêtes* which, in themselves, if stripped of ornament and fashion, he would have found dull in the extreme. Family parties, composed of insipid, cold, silent people, who have no ideas to communicate, would have been deemed by him an intolerable infliction but for the refinement of air, the elegance of dress, the brilliancy of light, and the glitter of fashion and style.

The most fashionable bride and bridegroom, however, must soon fall into the quiet routine of every-day life, and then the true qualities of heart and mind begin to develop themselves. Herbert's second establishment was very different from his first. When he had married Mary Harper, he was just starting in his profession, but now he was more than half way up the ladder, and, though far from rich, yet making a good income. But his present house, though a palace to the one that Mary had thought large enough for every imaginable happiness, was yet very inferior to the one Florence had been accustomed to under her father's roof. Mr. Howard, though a man of fortune, had not more income than he wanted—for rich people have so many wants—and, therefore, when his daughters married, they only brought expensive tastes and helpless habits as their dower. Florence had no idea of money; but she was accustomed to every elegance of wealth, and now looked around her in cold surprise at the absence of the superfluities she had deemed things of course.

Herbert was mortified to see how strongly she felt the contrast, for she had no idea of concealing her sentiments, and "the childlike unconsciousness," as he had termed her utter regardlessness of other people's feelings, and which had rather been a grace before, was anything but pleasant now to a man of his keen and sensitive temperament, when turned upon himself in domestic life. And, if she missed many things she had been accustomed to, he began to feel the loss of others he had hardly been aware of while he had them. Mary had taught him unconsciously to depend upon her affection, though at the time he had not valued it; but now he missed the love that had anticipated every want, and ministered to every whim. He had been the first, almost, it may be said, the only person in the family. His inclinations and his comforts had been studied with anxious care; and he missed, in Florence, not only the thousand and one little comforts his self-indulgent nature required, but the love that had prompted them.

Florence loved him as much as it was in her cold nature to love any one; but it was not in her nature to wait on anybody. She did not know what it was to make sacrifices, and she never consulted any human being's feelings in her life before her own. If he wanted to go to the opera when she felt inclined to stay at home, she quietly refused, perfectly unconscious of the unpleasant surprise she occasioned to one who had been accustomed to have his slightest invitations accepted with a gratitude that was almost humiliating. If he complained of any deficiency at table, it was calmly deemed the cook's affair, in which she had no lot or part. If the buttons were absent from his wristbands, she heard the announcement of the fact in the same spirit that she might if he had complained of the absence of a witness in a cause; and, when he asked her to mend a glove, she told him her work-box was up stairs.

Herbert was hasty and irritable, and sometimes spoke quickly; and, when he did, he was not so quickly forgiven. If he had temper, so had Florence. But his was the kind that vented itself in words; while hers took refuge in silence. And this always conquers the other.

The same distinction characterized all their faults and failings. His were active, hers passive. He was excitable, easily influenced. Heaven and earth could not have moved her. Had she been a woman of high-toned feelings and strong sensibility, she might have done much to redeem him; for his imagination and taste were of that fine order that impelled him to respond to the beautiful in the moral as in the physical world. The very poetry of his nature would have secured Florence his affection, if her character had been in keeping with her beauty; and, selfish as he was, love would have elevated and purified him. True, earnest feeling had been the great quality in which he had been deficient; but Florence was not the person to gain influence over him. He grew somewhat afraid of her, it is true, for the cold temper, as we have said, always masters the irritable one; but, beautiful, high bred, and refined as she looked, the undercurrent of her character was commonplace in the extreme. There was not a generous touch in her; and, in her way, she was as exacting as Herbert. She took no pains to keep his affection, and she resented losing it. She never made an effort to make home agreeable; but still she was indignant if he spent an evening at the club. She took no interest in the subjects that interested him, nor made an attempt to understand the public affairs in which he frequently took a large share. And yet nothing vexed her more deeply than to have him address any conversation on such topics to other women. Not that she was jealous, for Herbert was no flirt, and she knew it. But he talked well, and was naturally fond of society, and was very apt to enter with spirit in conversation with any one, man or woman, who could understand him. But woe be it to him if it happened to be a woman, for his wife scarcely spoke to him for a week after! And many an uncomfortable day he passed, in the early days of their married life, in consequence of a pleasant hour passed at an evening party.

If Florence did not improve her husband, she at least conquered him; and those who had known him during his first marriage looked on in surprise to see him, then so irritable and exacting, now governed by the dropping of an eyelid, or the compression of the lips, or some little movement almost imperceptible to bystanders, but yet most expressive in their silence to one who understood them. Florence's eyes never flashed, nor her voice altered, but, from the tip of her shoulder to the motion of her fairy foot, her whole being was eloquent with cold displeasure.

Herbert could not love her; but he watched her lightest movement, for he still loved his own quiet and peace.

Could Mary Harper have believed that this man was the same who was once her husband? If spirits return wrath, how would hers have been appeased could it have seen his punishment now?

And yet we wrong you, Mary Harper, even in the supposition! Your gentle, unoffending heart never roused to anger even here, when clogged with earth! The mortal did not need to put on immortality to forgive. But who, "unwhipped of justice," can wrong such a spirit? Is there not a retribution even here for the selfish soul that asks all and gives nothing? Was Herbert happy? If the first wife wept, the second avenged her.

THE MORNING OF THE HEART.

BY W. WALLACE SHAW.

"Soft as a bride the rosy dawn
From dewy sleep doth rise,
And, bathed in blushes, hath withdrawn
The mantle from her eyes;
And, with her orbs dissolved in dew,
Bends, like an angel, softly through
The blue-pavillioned skies."

AMELIA B. WELBY.

SEE! above yon mountain's brow
The roseate hue
Of early morning tinges now
The ether blue,
And stars that shone so purely bright
Upon the calmness of the night,
Now, slowly fading, leave their light
Upon the dew.

See! the lark is soaring high
Above the hills,
And, like bright threads of silver, lie
The mountain rills
Beneath the light of dawning day.
Through forest glades they wind away,
While all the air the linnet's lay
With music fills.

Op'ning rosebuds lend the breeze
Their odors rare,
That gently whispers 'mong the trees,
"Away with care!"
How calmly beautiful the dawn
Comes stealing o'er the dewy lawn,
While nature's minstrels pour sweet song
Upon the air!

Blushing brightly now, sweet flowers
Unfold their leaves,
The mountain sprite, for morning hours,
A garland weaves.
"Blest power of sunshine, genial day,
What balm, what life is in thy ray!
A warmth comes with thy transient stay
That ne'er deceives.

Now there 's music thrilling sweet
Within my heart,
While hope and peace there seem to meet,
No more to part;
And now, within my inmost soul,
A joy, new-born, hath found a goal,
And waves of sunlight o'er me roll,
'Tis now *the morning of the heart!*